

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-10 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03
ACDA-12 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
NSC-05 DODE-00 OIC-02 EB-08 OMB-01 DOE-15 SOE-02
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FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0335

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 USNATO 03173

FOR EUR/RPM

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: NATO, XF
SUBJECT: NATO EXPERTS REPORT ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE
MAGHREB

REF: USNATO A-63; MARCH 16, 1978

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1. REPAIR TRANSMITTED TEXT OF SPRING NATO EXPERTS
REPORT ON MIDDLE EAST AND MAGHREB (C-M(78)17). COPY HAS
ALSO BEEN POUCHED TO EUR/RPM (SAVAGE). REPORT IS SCHEDULED
TO BE AN AGENDA ITEM AT APRIL 5 MEETING OF THE NORTH
ATLANTIC COUNCIL.

2. AT NAC SESSION, PERMREPS WILL EXPECT AMBASSADOR TO
COMMENT ON SITUATION IN MIDDLE EAST AND TO FOCUS ON
THE PEACE PROCESS IN PARTICULAR. WE ARE CONFIDENT ALLIES
WOULD WELCOME ANY ANALYSIS SUPPLEMENTING STATE 74861 AND
77949 THAT WE MAY BE ABLE TO SHARE WITH THEM IN WAKE OF
LEBANESE SITUATION AND BEGIN VISIT. IN OUR VIEW, NAC
DISCUSSION WILL PROVIDE A USEFUL OPPORTUNITY TO REAFFIRM
TO ALL THE ALLIES AT ONCE BOTH THE CONTINUED US COMMIT-
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MENT TO THE BASIC PRINCIPLES WHICH HAVE GOVERNED OUR
POLICY IN THE REGION OVER THE YEARS AND OUR DETERMINATION
TO PURSUE THE PEACE PROCESS, WHATEVER THE OBSTACLES.

3. WHILE WE NORMALLY PROPOSE A FULL SET OF TALKING POINTS
FOR WASHINGTON REVIEW, WE BELIEVE IT BEST ON THIS OCCASION
TO RELY ON THE DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE THOSE POINTS RELATED

TO THE PEACE PROCESS WHICH MIGHT BEST BE REITERATED ON APRIL 5. HOWEVER, WE DO PROVIDE IN PARA 7 BELOW SEVERAL SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS ON OTHER ASPECTS OF THE REPORT. ACTION REQUESTED: TALKING POINTS ON PEACE PROCESS AND OTHER SUBJECTS FLAGGED BELOW BY APRIL 4, AS WELL AS SUGGESTED CHANGES IN THE POINTS AT PARA 7.

4. WITH REGARD TO LIBYA, WE AGREE WITH THRUST OF LONDON'S 03602 POINTING OUT NEED TO FURNISH OUR ALLIES WITH MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON DANGERS OF QADHAFI REGIME IF WE HOPE TO CONVINCE THEM OF THE CORRECTNESS OF OUR POLICY OF DISCOURAGING ARMS SALES TO LIBYA. THE APRIL 5 MEETING WILL PROVIDE ONE OPPORTUNITY TO OUTLINE IN A MULTILATERAL FORUM THE US BILL OF PARTICULARS ABOUT LIBYA AND US THOUGHTS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH QADHAFI.

5. SOVIET USE OF MENZEL BOURGUIBA DOCKYARDS (USNATO 01060 AND PREVIOUS) HAS BEEN A MATTER OF SOME ATTENTION AT NATO. WE BELIEVE FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUE MIGHT BEST BE LEFT FOR THE DRAFTING SESSIONS AND NAC REVIEW OF THE SEMI-ANNUAL MEDITERRANEAN REPORT IN APRIL AND MAY (USNATO 3018). SPECIFIC FOCUS OF THAT REPORT IS SOVIET PENETRATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION.

6. WITH REGARD TO PARA 45'S DISCUSSION OF ARAB BOYCOTT
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OF ISRAEL, THE UK DELEGATION INFORMS US THAT UK MINISTRY OF TRADE BOYCOTT EXPERTS HAVE QUESTIONED ASSERTION THAT THERE HAS BEEN SOME CHANGE IN PATTERN OF BOYCOTT ENFORCEMENT OVER PAST SEVERAL MONTHS. UK EXPERTS ALSO BELIEVE THE LAST SENTENCE IN PARA 45 IS FACTUALLY INCORRECT. AS A RESULT, UK WILL EITHER SUGGEST THAT PARAGRAPH BE DROPPED ALTOGETHER OR THAT IT BE CORRECTED. ACTION REQUESTED. IF WASHINGTON DOES NOT WISH TO HAVE THE PARA DROPPED, WE WILL NEED ARGUMENTATION SUPPORTING ITS ACCURACY. IF IMPROVEMENTS MIGHT BE MADE IN THE PARA, WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING PROPOSED REVISED LANGUAGE AND SUPPORTING ARGUMENTATION.

7. THERE FOLLOW BELOW SUGGESTED REMARKS AS A STARTING POINT FOR FURTHER WASHINGTON ELABORATION:

-- THE REPORT OF THE EXPERTS GROUP ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE MAGHREB IS COMPREHENSIVE AND, IN OUR VIEW, WAS ESSENTIALLY ACCURATE AND FORESIGHTED AS OF A MONTH AGO WHEN IT WAS COMPLETED.

-- WE WOULD HIGHLIGHT THE FOLLOWING POINTS ABOUT THE

MIDDLE-EAST PEACE PROCESS IN THE AFTERMATH OF EVENTS
IN LEBANON AND THE BEGIN VISIT TO WASHINGTON (PLEASE
PROVIDE)

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-- THE SOVIET UNION HAS ALSO SIGNALLED ITS CONTINUING
INTEREST IN A SETTLEMENT ON THE CONDITION THAT IT BE
SIGNIFICANTLY INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS. WE JUDGE THE
SOVIETS WILL BE GUIDED IN GREAT PART BY THE POLICIES
OF SYRIA ON THE ISSUE BUT AGREE WITH PARA 8 OF THE REPORT
WHEN IT OBSERVES THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO CONCEIVE OF

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A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT IN WHICH THE SOVIET UNION
DOES NOT PARTICIPATE IN SOME WAY.

-- WE AGREE WITH THE EMPHASIS ON SAUDI ARABIA IN PARAS
20-22 OF THE REPORT. IT CONTINUES TO PLAY AN EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT ROLE FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. AFTER
ITS INITIAL RESERVATIONS CONCERNING THE SADAT VISIT TO
JERUSALEM LAST NOVEMBER, SAUDI ARABIA HAS MAINTAINED
ITS CRUCIAL DIPLOMATIC AND FINANCIAL BACKING FOR
EGYPT. IT HAS ALSO ENCOURAGED OTHER AFRICAN STATES
TO DO THE SAME.

-- SO FAR AT LEAST, SAUDI MODERATION HAS CONTINUED
IN THE VITAL AREA OF OPEC OIL PRICING AND IN ITS OWN
OIL PRODUCTION POLICIES. (COMMENT: WE WOULD WELCOME
ANY COMMENTS WE MIGHT MAKE ON THIS POINT IN ADDITION
TO THOSE IN PARA 20 AND 43 OF THE REPORT).

-- WITH REGARD TO THE REPORT'S DISCUSSION OF SITUATION

IN THE WESTERN SAHARA, WE AGREE WITH THE ASSERTION IN
PARA 27 THAT THE SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPUTE SEEMS UNLIKELY
IN THE NEAR FUTURE EVEN IF A CLASH BETWEEN ALGERIA AND
MOROCCO APPEARS LESS APT TO TAKE PLACE THAN IT ONCE
DID. THE US REMAINS FIRM IN ITS ADVOCACY OF A PEACEFUL
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SETTLEMENT AND WILL CONTINUE TO URGE THE NATIONS INVOLVED
TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT.

-- WE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE ONE POINT ABOUT LIBYA TO
SUPPLEMENT THE DISCUSSION IN PARAS 38-41 OF THE REPORT
(WASHINGTON PLEASE PROVIDE IF APPROPRIATE PER PARA 4
ABOVE).

-- REGARDING THE UK COMMENTS ON PARA 45 RE THE BOYCOTT
OF ISRAEL (WASHINGTON PLEASE PROVIDE PER PARA 6
ABOVE). BENNETT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, SITREP, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USNATO03173
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780134-0836
Format: TEL
From: USNATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780316/aaaaanhp.tel
Line Count: 192
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 772afebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 USNATO A-63
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3176594
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATO EXPERTS REPORT ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE MAGHREB
TAGS: PINR, PDIP, XF, NATO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/772afebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014